Fabulou FURNITURE

Personalize furniture fabrics to meet needs

Upholstered furniture pieces add color, style and warmth to a room's ambiance. Just don't allow yourself to be intimidated by the thousands of samples that most stores and design professionals make available. You already know that you detest/love orange, or teal, or green, as you've eliminated a few thousand possibilities before you even start.

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On further consideration: You have children and a large dog durability, is your top priority. You entertain frequently, elegance is a must. You love antiques, you want your sofar covered in a mellow fabric that will blend in with older pieces. See how easy it is?

"I start with a client interview," anys Barbara Krass, director of design for Colorworks Studio of Interior Design in Farmigton Hills." Do you want a soft or a slick look? Dramatic or cozy? After the style is deter-

cozy? After the style is deter-mined, we settle on a color scheme. In a room with soft scheme. In a room with soft scaling, such as a great room, we determine the fabric palette before walls or floor covering. Look at a room as a painting. Fabric is the foreground, everything else is background.

All fabrics begin with fibers that are either natural or synthetic (manufactured). Common-

ly used natural fibers are cotton, silk, and wool. Synthetics include rayon, acrylic, polyester, and nylon.

Modern manufacturing techniques have blurred the distinctions between natural and synthetic fibers. Not long ago, natural fibers were characterized by their feel, and synthetics were selected for their durability and stain-resistance. Thanks to technology, stain-reducing treatments, like Teflon, have increased the longevity of natural fabrics, while innovations in yarn-making have made synthetics softer and more comfortable.

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"Thanks to the new treatments, it's entirely possible, and practical, to use silk as a soft covering," says Krass. There are so many other improvements and innovations. One of my favorites is a polyester/woven fabric that can look exactly like matural fabrics that are hard to maintain, such as straw or raffin or woven leather. Clients love them, especially with the natural look that's so big now, incorporating a lot of stone, metals and woods. I'm very picky —I wouldn't use these if they didn't look like the real thing."

An outstanding example of technological innovation is chenille, one of the most popular upholstery fabrics around.

technological innovation is che-nille, one of the most popular upholstery fabrics around, according to David Buzenberg, president and fabric buyer for

Walker/Buzenberg Furniture Inc. in Plymouth.
Forget retro: This is not your grandmother's chenille, the stuff of which bedspreads and cuddly bathrobes were made. "The new chenilles are pre-washed rayon; they have a built-in durability, and a soft, silky feel," explains Buzenberg.
"The very casual look of the past six or seven years is trending toward a more formal style with a casual feel. Chenille, especially cut chenille with a floral or paisley pattern, is an example of a more formal look with a casual feel. Popular colors are shades of brown, such as raisin or Sienna, or sage green. Earth tones in general are very big. They give a European, Old World look that the younger age 25 to 45 - group appreciates. They want a coxy look that chenille provides."
Another popular look incorporates there related fabries on ane

nille provides."
Another popular look incorporates three related fabrics on one jeece. For example, the sent cushions might be a large floral pattern, the back cushions the same floral in a smaller version, and the body of the piece a matching solid or a mini-print, dots, perhaps.

Walker/Buzenberg carries five

Mixing it up: Living room features warm tones and textures mixing tweed chenille and neutral stripes. The artwork adds a burst of color to the mix.

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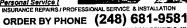


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